



SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Giles Dudley arrives in San Francisco to join his friend and distant relative Henry Wilton, whom he was to assist in an important and mysterious task, and who accompanied Dudley on the ferry boat trip into the city. The remarkable resemblance of the two men is noted and commented on by passengers on the ferry. They see a man with snake eyes which sends a thrill through Dudley. Wilton postpones an explanation of the strange errand Dudley is to perform, but occurrences cause him to know it is one of no ordinary meaning. Wilton leaves Giles in their room, with instruction to await his return and shoot any one who tries to enter.

CHAPTER II.—Outside there is heard shouts and curses and the noise of a quarrel. Henry rushes in and at his request the roommates quickly exchange clothes, and he hurries out again. Hardly has he gone than Giles is startled by a cry of "Help," and he runs out to find some one being assaulted by a half dozen men. He summons a policeman but they are unable to find any trace of a crime.

CHAPTER III.—Giles returns to his room and hunts for some evidence that might explain his strange mission. He finds a map which he endeavors to decipher. He goes to sleep and is awakened by the presence of some one in his room. They grapple and the person demands to know "where is the boy?" Four figures come to the rescue and blind and gag the intruder. Dudley is mistaken for Henry Wilton, and receives a note regarding money to be paid him.

CHAPTER IV.—Dudley is summoned to the morgue and there finds the dead body of his friend, Henry Wilton, who had been killed during the fight outside the building of the night before. He gives the name of James Dudley to the coroner, in order to partially carry out the disguise and to more successfully carry out the task his friend had imposed on him while living. And thus Wilton couldn't carry it with all his wits about him.

CHAPTER V.—In order to discover the secret mission his friend had entrusted to him, Dudley continues his disguise and permits himself to be known as Henry Wilton. He is puzzled over the note he had received asking him to call at the bank for money. He is called before Doddridge Knapp, the King of the street, the man who looks like a wolf. Dudley, mistaken for Wilton, is employed by Knapp to assist in a stock brokerage deal.

CHAPTER VI.—"Dicky" takes the supposed Wilton to Mother Borton's. Mother Borton discovers that he is not Wilton and tells him so in confidence. A mysterious man asks about "the boy." A reply that Dudley makes causes the man to rave. The lights are turned out and a

CHAPTER VII.
Mother Borton.

The noise of the struggle below continued. Yells and curses rose from the maddened men. Three shots were fired in quick succession, and a cry of "Oh, my Lord!" penetrated through the closed door with the sound of one sorely hurt.

I lingered for a little, listening to the tumult. I was in a strange and dangerous position. Enemies were behind me. There were friends, too, but I knew no way to tell one from the other, and my ignorance had nearly brought me to my death. I hesitated to move, but I could not remain in the open hall; and as the sounds of disturbance from below subsided, I felt my way along the wall and moved cautiously forward.

I had progressed perhaps twenty steps when a door, against which my hand pressed, yielded at the touch and swung slowly open. I strove to stop it, for the first opening showed a dim light within. But the panel gave no hold for my fingers, and my efforts to close the door only swung it open the faster. I drew back a little into the shadow, for I hesitated to dash past the sight of any who might occupy the room.

"Come in!" called a harsh voice. I hesitated. Behind, the road led to the eating-room with its known dangers. A dash along the hall for the front door meant the raising of an alarm, and probably a bullet as a discourager of burglary. Should I escape this, I could be certain of a warm reception from the enemies on watch outside. Prudence lay in facing the one rather than risking the many. I accepted the invitation and walked into the room.

"I was expecting you," said the harsh voice composedly. "Good evening."

"Good evening," I returned gravely, swallowing my amazement as best I could.

By the table before me sat Mother Borton, contemplating me as calmly as though this meeting were the most commonplace thing in the world. A candle furnished a dim, flickering light that gave to her hard wicked countenance a diabolic leer that struck a chill to my blood.

"Excuse me," I said, "I have lost my way, I fear."

"Not at all," said Mother Borton. "You are in the right place."

"I was afraid I had intruded," I said apologetically.

"I expected you," she repeated. "Shut the door."

I glanced about the room. There was no sign of another person to be seen, and no other door. I obeyed her.

"You might as well sit down," she said with some petulance. "There's nothing up here to hurt you. There was so much meaning in her tone of the things that would hurt me on the floor below that I hastened to show my confidence in her, and drew up a chair to the table.

"At your service," I said, leaning before her with as much an appearance of jaunty self-possession as I could muster.

"Who are you, and what are you doing here?" she asked grimly.

What should I answer? Could I tell her the truth?

"Who are you?" she repeated impatiently, gazing on me. "You are not Wilton. Tell me. Who are you?"

The face, hard as it was, seemed with the record of a rough and evil life, as it appeared, had yet a kindly look as it was turned on me.

"My name is Dudley—Giles Dudley."

"Where is Wilton?"

"Dead."

"Dead? Did you kill him?" The half-kindly look disappeared from her eyes and the hard lines settled into an expression of malevolent repulsiveness.

"He was my best friend," I said sadly; and then I described the leading events of the tragedy I had witnessed.

The old woman listened closely, and with hardly the movement of a muscle, to the tale I told.

"And you think he left his job to you?" she said with a sneer.

"I have taken it up as well as I can. To be frank with you, Mrs. Borton, I know nothing about his job. I'm going along on blind chance, and trying to keep a whole skin."

The old woman looked at me in amazement.

"Poor boy!" she exclaimed half-pityingly, half-admiringly. "You put your hands to a job you know nothing about, when Henry Wilton couldn't carry it with all his wits about him."

"I didn't do it," said I sullenly. "It has done itself. Everybody insists that I'm Wilton. If I'm to have my throat slit for him I might as well try to do his work. I wish to Heaven I knew what it was, though."

Mother Borton leaned her head on her hand, and gazed on me thoughtfully for a full minute.

"Young man," said she impressively, "take my advice. There's a train for the East in the mornin'. Just git on board, and never you stop short of Chicago."

"I'm not running away," said I bitterly. "I've got a score to settle with

the man who killed Henry Wilton. When that score is settled, I'll go to Chicago or anywhere else. Until that's done, I stay where I can settle it."

Mother Borton caught up the candle and moved it back and forth before my face. In her eyes there was a gleam of savage pleasure.

"By God, he's in earnest!" she said to herself, with a strange laugh. "Tell me again of the man you saw in the alley."

I described Doddridge Knapp.

"And you are going to get even with him?" she said with a chuckle that had no mirth in it.

"Yes," said I shortly.

"Why, if you should touch him the people of the city would tear you to pieces."

"I shall not touch him. I'm no assassin!" I exclaimed indignantly. "The law shall take him, and I'll see him hanged as high as Haman."

Mother Borton gave a low, gurgling laugh.

"The law! oh, my liver—the law! How young you are, my boy! Oh, ho, oh ho!" And again she absorbed her mirthless laugh, and gave me an evil grin. Then she became grave again, and laid a claw on my sleeve. "Take my advice now, and git on the train."

"Not if!" I returned stoutly.

"I'm doing it for your own good," she said, with as near an approach to a coaxing tone as she could command. It was long since she had used her

voice for such a purpose and it grated. "For my sake I'd like to see you go on and wipe out the whole raft of 'em. But I know what'll happen to ye, honey. I've took a fancy to ye. I don't know why. But there's a look on your face that carries me back for forty years, and—don't try it, dearie."

There were actually tears in the creature's eyes, and her hard, wicked face softened, and became almost tender and womanly.

"I can't give up," I said. "The work is put on me. But can't you help me? I believe you want to. I trust you. Tell me what to do—where I stand. I'm all in the dark, but I must do my work."

It was the best appeal I could have made.

"You're right," she said. "I'm an old fool, and you've got the real sand

you're the first one except Henry Wilton that's trusted me in forty years, and you won't be sorry for it, my boy. You owe me one, now. Where would you have been to-night if I hadn't had the light doused on ye?"

"Oh, that was your doing, was it? I thought my time had come."

"Oh, I was sure you'd know what to do. It was your best chance."

"Then will you help me now?"

The old crone considered, and her face grew sharp and cunning in its look.

"What can I do?"

"Tell me, in God's name, where I stand. What is this dreadful mystery? Who is this boy? Why is he hidden and why do these people want to know where he is? Who is behind me and who threatens me with death?"

I burst out with these question passionately, almost frantically. This was the first time I had had chance to demand them of another human being.

Mother Borton gave me a leer.

"I wish I could tell you, my dear, but I don't know."

"You mean you dare not tell me," I said boldly. "You have done me a great service, but if I am to save myself from the dangers that surround me I must know more. Can't you see that?"

"Yes," she nodded. "You're in a hard row of stumps, young man."

"And you can help me."

"Well, I will," she said, suddenly softening again. "I took a shine to you when you came in, an' I says to myself, 'I'll save that young fellow,' an' I done it. And I'll do more. Mr. Wilton was a fine gentleman, an' I'd do something, if I could, to get even with those murderin' gutter-pickers that laid him out on a slab."

She hesitated and looked around at the shadows thrown by the flickering candle.

"Well!" I said impatiently. "Who is the boy, and where is he?"

"Never you mind that young fellow. Let me tell you what I know. Then maybe we'll have time to go into things I don't know."

It was of no use to urge her. I bowed my assent to her terms.

"I'll name no names," she said. "My throat can be cut as quick as yours, and maybe quicker."

"The ones that has the boy means all right. They're rich. The ones as is looking for the boy is all wrong. They'll be rich if they gits him."

"How?"

"Why, I don't know," said Mother Borton. "I'm tellin' you what Henry Wilton told me."

This was maddening. I began to suspect that she knew nothing after all.

"Do you know where he is?" I asked, taking the questioning into my own hands.

"No"—sullenly.

"Who is protecting him?"

"I don't know."

"Who is trying to get him?"

"It's that snake-eyed Tom Terrill that's leading the hunt, along with Darby Meeker; but they ain't doing it for themselves."

"Is Doddridge Knapp behind them?"

The old woman looked at me suddenly in wild-eyed alarm.

"S-s-h!" she whispered. "Don't name no names."

"And is this all you know?" I asked in disappointment.

Mother Borton tried to remember some other point.

"I don't see how it's going to keep a knife from between my ribs," I complained.

"You keep out of the way of Tom Terrill and his hounds, and you'll be all right, I reckon."

"Am I supposed to be the head man in this business?"

"Yes."

"Who are my men?"

"There's Wilson and Fitzhugh and Porter and Brown," and she named ten or a dozen more.

"And what is Dicky?"

"It's a smart man as can put his finger on Dicky Nahl," said Mother Borton spitefully.

"Nahl is his name?"

"Yes. And I've seen him hobnob with Henry Wilton, and I've seen him thick as thieves with Tom Terrill, and which he's thickest with the devil himself couldn't tell. I call him Slippery Dicky."

"Why did he bring me here to-night?"

"I hear there's orders come to change the place—the boy's place, you know. You was to tell 'em where the new one was to be, I reckon, but Tom Terrill spoiled things. He's lightning, is Tom Terrill. But I guess he got it all out of Dicky, though where Dicky got it the Lord only knows."

This was all that was to be had from Mother Borton. Either she knew no more, or she was sharp enough to hide a knowledge that might be dangerous, even fatal, to reveal. She was willing to serve me, and I was forced to let it pass that she knew no more.

"Well, I'd better be going then," said I at last. "It's nearly 4 o'clock, and everything seems to be quiet hereabouts. I'll find my way to my room."

"You'll do no such thing," said Mother Borton. "They've not given up the chase yet. Your men have gone home, I reckon, but I'll bet the saloon that you'd have a surprise before you got to the corner."

"Not a pleasant prospect," said I grimly.

"No. You must stay here. The room next to this one is just the thing for you. See?"

She drew me into the adjoining room, shading the candle as we passed through the hall that no gleam might fall where it would attract attention.

"You'll be safe here," she said. "Now do as I say. Go to sleep and git some rest. You ain't had much, I guess, since you got to San Fran-

cisco."

The room was cheerless, but in the circumstances the advice appeared good. I was probably safer here than in the street, and I needed the rest.

"Good night," said my strange protectress. "You needn't git up till you git ready. This is a beautiful room—beautiful. I call it our bridal chamber, though we don't get no brides down here. There won't be no sun to bother your eyes in the mornin', for that window don't open up outside. So there can't nobody git in unless he comes from inside the house. There, git to bed. Look out you don't set fire to nothing. And put out the candle. Now good night, dearie."

Mother Borton closed the door behind her, and left me to the shadows.

There was nothing to be gained by sitting up, and the candle was past its final inch. I felt that I could not sleep, but I would lie down on the bed and rest my tired limbs, that I might refresh myself for the demands of the day. I kicked off my boots, put my revolver under my hand and lay down.

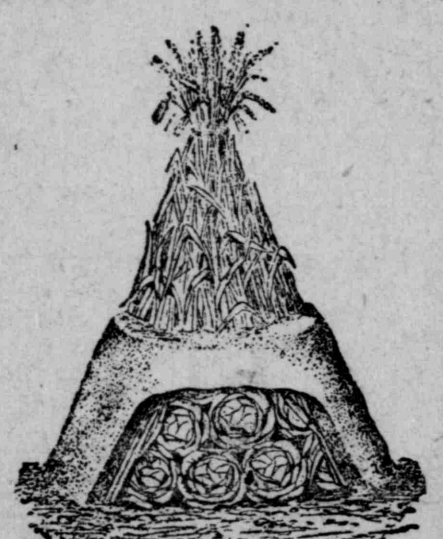
Headless of Mother Borton's warning I left the candle to burn to the socket, and watched the flickering shadows chase each other over walls and ceiling, finally dropping off to sleep.

(To be continued.)



Try a Corn Shock Covering with Dirt Banked on Outside.

Select a rise in the ground at some convenient place and mark out a circle that will hold about so many heads of cabbage, according to the



Sectional View of Buried Cabbage.

number you want to put in. Place a row around the outer edge of the circle with roots pointing toward the center. Cover the roots and place another row inside this.

After the bottom layer is complete, explain the Farm and Home, commence with the second layer, as shown in cut, placing one head between or directly over the first with a slight drawing in toward the center. Place the roots toward the center as before, and keep on until you form a dome.

Now get good corn fodder and place it around the dome of cabbage as shown, tying it at the top the same as a shock of corn, then cover with earth to the top. Commence a little below the top and at one side to take out your cabbage.

OHIO CHINAMEN

Cable Prince Chun to Execute Yuan Shai Kai as Poisoner of Emperor.

Columbus, O., Nov. 2.—Chan Mon Chon and Chan Lee Fong of Columbus and Chan Kong Yue of Cleveland, signing themselves as representatives of Chinese subjects in Ohio, sent a cablegram to United States Minister Rockhill at Peking reading as follows: "Please convey to Prince Chun that Yuan Shai Kai poisoned Emperor Kwangsu; aroused extreme hatred people; beg prince execute him immediately in the name of justice and civilization." They said the message was sent to the United States minister because they feared that in the red tape of the Chinese government the cable never would reach its destination unless forwarded through diplomatic channels.

Gilbert Visits Taft.

Hot Springs, Va., Nov. 2.—Ohio political affairs were discussed between President-elect Taft and W. B. Gilbert, auditor for that state. Judge Taft was also visited by Lieutenant F. J. H. Kracke of Brooklyn, naval officer of the port, whose call was purely social. An extended golf game with his brother, Henry W. Taft, and General Edwards, and several hours in the saddle, brought the president-elect home at dark in possession of a good healthy tired feeling.

Daly's Jurisdiction Extended.

Chicago, Nov. 2.—President W. H. Newman of the New York Central lines has announced that, beginning today, the jurisdiction of Vice President Charles F. Daly will be extended over the entire traffic department both east and west of Buffalo. This, according to President Newman's announcement, places Mr. Daly in charge not only of freight and passenger traffic, but of mail and express as well.

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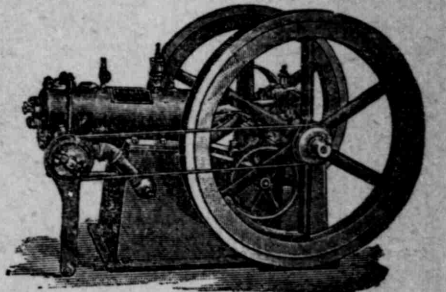
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When the Fish Refuse to Bite.
Sydney Smith's idea that every fine day is lost on which the Englishman does not kill something is still over true, so that the off-day in the Highlands is often a misery of inaction only because of the perversity of babynot, whereas it ought to be a day on which it is possible for the active body to do nothing, and do it well, and for the active mind to be idle without remorse.—Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News.